

**Making sense of HIV/AIDS gender issues in Butterworth [Eastern Cape Province],
South Africa**

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DECLARATION

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Signed: **T. Nhyiba**

Date: March 2011

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this assignment is to investigate how women in Butterworth reflect over and deal with HIV/AIDS in their everyday lives and also how they explain the cause and spread of the virus. The assignment is based on two months of fieldwork in Butterworth South Africa, where I got the opportunity to interview three women about HIV/AIDS and how they related to the disease as well as how people in general relate to it. The women I interviewed were all working with HIV/AIDS as counselors and educational staff. The women work in Msobomvu, Cuba and Ibika Township three very different areas in Butterworth.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van die werkstuk is om ondersoek in te stel hoe vroue in Butterworth MIV/Vigs ervaar in hul alledaagse lewe en ook hoe hul die oorsaak en omvang van die virus verstaan. Die werkstuk is baseer op twee maande se veldwerk in Butterworth, Suid-Afrika, waar die navorser onderhoude met drie vroue oor MIV/Vigs gevoer het en fokus op hoe hul hulself met die epidemie vereenselwig. Die vroue met wie onderhoude gevoer is, is MIV/Vigs beraders en opvoeders. Die vroue werk in Msobomvu, Cuba and Ibika plakkerskamp, drie verskillende areas in Butterworth.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

HIV has been known to the world for almost thirty years and was first discovered among homosexual men in Los Angeles and New York. At that time the doctors and scientists did not know what the disease was but they did notice that the men had a lack of the CD4 cell that is a very important cell to get the immune system to work properly. In 1983 – two years after the discovery – researchers in the United States and in France described the virus that caused AIDS. (URL 3) Many years have gone by since we first discovered HIV and unfortunately it continues to be a major problem in most states, including South Africa. Although HIV/AIDS is a problem for everyone infected by the virus, the possibilities of controlling through medication and a healthy living differ greatly between rich and poor people.

South Africa has had a turbulent past, not only during the last 80 years (URL 4) of apartheid, but a continuous oppression of the native South African people has been maintained for centuries. Today South Africa is a free country with a democracy governed by the African National Congress (ANC) and so it has been since the apartheid system was abolished in 1994. Even one of the major issues ANC has to deal with is the health problem in South Africa where 20 percent of the entire population, or 43 million people, are living with HIV/AIDS (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 1996: 213). That means that 1/10 of all the people in the world infected by HIV/AIDS are now living in South Africa (URL 5).

There are of course not only health problems in South Africa. Though the economy is on its way up, South Africa has big problems with poverty and a lack of education in many groups of the society. There is also a high level of unemployment in the country. 31 percent of the black population is unemployed - only 5 percent of the white population. The youth unemployment is extremely high, with 70 percent of the black and colored youths between 16 and 24 are unemployed. The total amount of unemployed was in 2006 39 percent (URL 6) t. The bad possibilities for education, the persistent poverty and a high level of unemployment are contributory factors to the HIV/AIDS problem in South Africa and the numbers of people infected keep rising day by day.

In contrast to USA, South Africa has not been able to deal openly and publicly with the HIV/AIDS problem until just a few years ago. This is a problem related to government policies. The president Thabo Mbeki had for a long time denied the relation between HIV and AIDS and he also supported the statement saying that antiretroviral drugs are life-threatening. This has delayed the constructive discussion concerning HIV/AIDS necessary to raise the awareness among the South African people, and has probably contributed to the large number of infected people in South Africa today.

1.2. PROBLEM FORMULATION

Among theorists and practitioners concerned with gender and development, it is increasingly argued that it is not enough to work with women's empowerment if we are to transform unequal gender relations. For women to be able to exercise the rights they have learnt about rather than encounter a male backlash, boys and men need to be involved in gender work as well (Chant S & Guttman M, 2000: 11; Crossley, 2002: 28; Kaufman, 1994: 19). Accordingly, across the world there are gender, antiviolenace and SRHR programmes attempting to involve men to a greater extent. These are gaining increased attention. Men's involvement in the struggle for gender equality has long divided the women's movement; while most seem to agree that it is an inevitable part of sustainable gender equality work, a great deal of scepticism still remains.

Based on the premise that it involves 'the mobilization of members of a privileged group in order to undermine that same privilege' (Gelles, 1997: 458), some caution that it risks drawing on men's articulated interests and thereby entrenches men's gendered power rather than genuinely challenges it. Moreover, there is a fear that the focus on women and feminist analysis is at stake when 'bringing men in'. Some argue that certain 'male involvement'⁴ programmes, indeed, have a flawed understanding of gendered power relations (Baylies C & Bujra, 2000: 225; Waetjen & Mare, 2001; Epstein, 1998: 1; Peacock & Botha, 2006: 46).

In order to enable women's rights organisations to continue defining goals in relation to gender, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS, some theorists and practitioners call for the establishment of stronger links between work with men and male gender activism and women's gender activism (Baylies, 2000: 23; Kaufman, 2004: 24, 27; Reid & Walker, 2005: 215; Sideris, 2005; Epstein, 1998). Yet, very few gender organisations and programmes focusing on men have direct and close collaborations with the women's movement (Epstein, 1998: 1), although counter examples exist (Kaufman, 1994: 27). Notable exceptions are the

South African NGO Sonke Gender Justice Network (henceforth Sonke) and the South African branch of the international NGO (INGO) EngenderHealth⁵. Both implement gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS programmes in South Africa, carried out predominately by men and for boys and men, with a strong emphasis on masculinities. Simultaneously, both argue that they should be supportive of, accountable to and in ongoing dialogue with women's rights organisations. This thesis explores linkages between women's and men's gender activism in this specific South African context.

Work with men, male gender activism and arguments concerning building bridges between such initiatives and the women's movement bring a number of questions about gender and power to the fore. Given the unequal power relations between women and men in society, what should the relationship be like between gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS organisations focusing on men and women's rights organisations⁶ according to people in the field? What gender and power analyses underlie these arguments? How are women and men constituted as gendered subjects in 'Male involvement' is a key term in the evolving masculinities discourse within GAD, and many organisations and male gender activists, indeed, aim at involving men in gender work to a greater extent. However, I would like to somewhat distance myself from the concept. At times, it is used in a rather gender stereotypical way, indicating that men need to be involved in gender work while women mobilise as activists. For the same reason, I frequently prefer the expressions 'male gender activism' and 'work with men' respectively.

Engender Health henceforth refers to the South African branch of Engender Health if otherwise not stated. I have chosen to refer to Engender Health, Sonke and similar initiatives as 'gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS organisations focusing on men' rather than 'men's organisations'. The reason for this is mainly to avoid confusion with reactionary 'men's rights organisations'. I frequently use (gender) organisations and gender activism as short for gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS organisations and activism, i.e. those working with the intersection of gender, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. The terms women's organisations and women's rights organisations are used interchangeably for those gender, antiviolence and/or HIV/AIDS organisations working primarily with women.

The discourse employed and how do people in the field engage with these subject positions?

Another important aspect concerns international development cooperation, given its support to and influence over gender and HIV/AIDS work in the region. What are the links between the strong partnership discourse in the development field and arguments for partnerships between organisations focusing on men and women's organisations specifically? Below, I specify the aim of the study and the particular research questions which have guided the writing of this paper.

1.3. AIM OF STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis addresses the linkages between, on the one hand, male gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS activism and, on the other hand, women's collective action and possibilities to continue defining objectives in the struggles against HIV/AIDS, gender inequality and gender based violence, given the attention drawn to men and masculinities in this field in recent years.

The purpose of the study is to analyse gendered power relations in the male involvement discourse in relation to the bridging of men's and women's gender activism. This global discourse is analysed in a South African context, more precisely by studying Sonke and Engender Health as well as, to a somewhat lesser extent, their partner organisations Yabonga, People Opposing Women Abuse (henceforth POWA), and Masimanyane Women's Support Centre (henceforth Masimanyane). All of these NGOs work with the intersection of gender, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS in South Africa. While the former two concentrate on men, the latter three work primarily with women.

The study is based on a feminist perspective, whereby notions of gender are not merely assumed to produce meaning but also power. Following Michel Foucault, power is conceptualised here as complex and distributed rather than in binary terms. The overall analytical research question of the thesis is as follows:

- How are gendered powers relations articulated, reproduced and or resisted in the male involvement discourse in relation to the bridging of women's and men's gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS activism in South Africa? More specifically, my intention is to answer the following questions:

- How are different positions in the male involvement discourse constructed – specifically in relation to the formation of links between men’s and women’s gender activism?
- What gender and power analyses underlie arguments and practices related to creating such links?
- What is the role of donors and international development cooperation in the male involvement discourse in relation to forming such links?

Currently, there are gaps in research making these issues crucial to explore.

1.4. RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH

In spite of the fact that gender and HIV/AIDS activism in South Africa has been paid a rather great deal of attention, there are still some under-researched areas within these fields. As Mandisa Mbali states, while many researchers have explored how gender and sexuality shape HIV/AIDS, little interest has been displayed in the issue of how these power relations influence the actual HIV/AIDS activism (1994: 177). Another for the most part under-researched aspect of HIV/AIDS and gender politics is that of international development aid and its impact on local and transnational civil society and power relations (Thörn & Follér, 2008: 291). Hence, there is need for research on the politics of gender and HIV/AIDS in South Africa which focuses on power relations in the civil society and takes the role of international development aid into consideration.

Within this area of research, this thesis focuses on linkages between women’s and men’s gender, antiviolenace and HIV/AIDS activism. In spite of occasional calls in the literature for creating stronger such links, I have not been able to find any research on this specific topic.

When studying general literature on male gender activism and male involvement as well as when communicating with researchers in the field, I have not come across any references to such studies (e.g. Robins, meeting; Cornwall, personal correspondence). For instance, as Emily Esplen states, ‘It’s striking how little we really know or understand about women’s hostility towards working with men, or indeed about men’s experiences of trying to work with feminist and women’s organisations’ (1994: 3). My intention is that this study will be a small contribution to the filling of this huge gap.

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON POWER

2.1. THE POWER PERSPECTIVES OF LUKES AND FOUCAULT

Power has traditionally been understood in binary terms. Such a perspective is interested in observable conflicts of interests between the ‘powerful’ and the ‘powerless’, where the choices of the latter are restricted. The influential power theorists Lukes and Foucault have offered alternatives to this view which have inspired many others interested in the concept of power, such as GAD researchers.

In his book *Power: A Radical View*, Lukes argues for a three-dimensional view of power. The first aspect corresponds to the traditional one-dimensional view, where power is conceptualised as one actor deliberately exercising power over another (1994: 11). The second dimension concerns the inadequacy of associating power with such actual, observable conflict, therefore drawing attention to non-decision as a form of power.

He discusses the ‘bias of the system’, i.e. socio-economic structures which are advantageous to dominant groups (ibid.: 17), claiming that this is not sustained simply by a series of individually chosen acts, but also, most importantly, by the socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions, which may indeed be manifested by individuals’ inactions. (ibid: 21f) To these perspectives he influentially adds a third dimension, arguing that power is exercised most efficiently in situations where conflicts are covert and latent since a person can exercise power over someone else by influencing her/his very wants. Hence, power can be internalised and thereby prevent people from having grievances as they frequently cannot imagine any alternative to the existing order (ibid: 23).

By describing the emergence of modern forms of power, Foucault also avoids a binary understanding of power relations. He argues that these are not exercised occasionally and top down by certain institutions or structures. Rather, power is continuous and diffuse, inherent in all social relations (Leach, Fiscian, Kadzamira, Lemani & Machakanja, and 2003:124). According to Foucault, power cannot be acquired, seized or possessed by any individual or social group, and is not determined by economic relations. Instead, he maintains power is not that which makes the difference between those who exclusively possess and retain it, and those who do not have it and submit to it. Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never

localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power (2003b: 98).

This is not to say that we are 'dealing with a sort of democratic or anarchic distribution of power through bodies' (ibid: 99). Foucault is, however, more interested in degrees of power involved in a particular relation and how people negotiate these power relations than seeing power as a fixed and stable part of relations between individuals or groups (Mills, 2001: 34). Lukes and Foucault both avoid a simplistic and dichotomous perspective on power. A crucial difference between the two is that Lukes still perceives power in negative terms as something which first and foremost prevents, represses and prohibits, whereas to Foucault, power is also productive through the construction of knowledge, individuals, identities and practices (Foucault, 1994: 227; Leach, Fiscian, Kadzamira, Lemani & Machakanja, 2003:124; Mills, 2001 17, 32, 64; Bujra, (2002: 69). According to Foucault, the individual is constituted by power relations rather than simply oppressed by them (Mills, 2001: 19). The theory on power which I have found most fruitful in relation to my data is mainly inspired by Foucault. However, I use Lukes' theory to gain a background understanding when analysing the power perspectives underlying arguments in my material. An understanding of power as complex has also inspired scholars interested in hierarchies in international development cooperation.

2.2. POWER RELATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Power inequalities in development aid have long been subject of debate and criticism. Although I seek to have a critical perspective to aid, my aim is to provide a nuanced analysis, which acknowledges aid as a heterogeneous phenomenon and goes beyond the debate on whether it is 'good or bad' (Taylor, Dlamini, Nyawo, Jinabhai, Sathiparsad, & de Vreis, 2005). To begin with, I discuss power, agency and resistance in international development cooperation. This is followed by an introduction to the dominant partnership discourse in this field as I argue that it overlaps with the male involvement discourse in focus here. The last section looks into the issue of NGO accountability, since the language of accountability turned out to be fundamental in arguments about bridging women's and men's gender, anti-violence and HIV/AIDS activism.

Hence, the purpose of these latter two sections is primarily to contextualise positions identified in the male involvement discourse.

2.2.1. Power, agency and resistance in aid

Many have argued that it is simplistic to assume a rationalist model whereby development intervention is viewed as a harmonious process based on equality and mutual goals. Rather, there is an obvious power imbalance inherent in the relation between donors and receivers of aid. This is especially so since funds frequently go the same direction and usually also with economic and political strings attached. Furthermore, these imbalances are closely related to racial and national identities (Mlamleli, Mabelane, Napo, Sibiyi, Free, 2000; Morrell Moletsane Abdool Karim Epstein & Unterhalter, 2002). Power structures related to people's intersecting identities of, for instance, gender, age, class, 'race' and nationality conflate with institutional positions within the 'aid industry', such as donor or recipient, junior or senior etc. (Taylor, Dlamini, Nyawo, Jinabhai, Sathiparsad, & de Vreis, 2005).

Hence, in accordance with the power perspective described above, where power is conceptualised as complex, multidimensional and mobile, one cannot divide development aid actors into powerful 'developers' and powerless recipients (ibid.: 184, 192). In addition, although donor-recipient relations are unequal and frequently argued to involve conflicting interests, development practice and discourse cannot be entirely controlled by the former. Interventions do not proceed smoothly from policy and implementation to outcomes in predictable ways. Instead, there is always a certain room of manoeuvre available for receiving organisations in development networks.

This is not to say that donor-recipient categories are dichotomous. They certainly overlap in so far as funds circulate in complex networks where most donors also are recipients (Taylor, Dlamini, Nyawo, Jinabhai, Sathiparsad, & de Vreis, 2005: 88, 180). However, in a specific relation between a donor and a recipient, funds tend to go in one direction.

Take advantage of these for independent interpretation, action or even resistance, both in relation to donors and other actors in the local contexts. While not necessarily consciously, policies and concepts are infused with new meanings, transformed and sometimes resisted by various actors in what could be called processes of hybridisation (Eriksson Baaz, 2005: 8, 73; Jones, 2004: 402; (Taylor, Dlamini, Nyawo, Jinabhai, Sathiparsad, & de Vreis, 2005: 24, 89;

155). Even though power in development aid is a complex issue rather than a matter of powerful versus powerless, hierarchies undoubtedly prevail. Since roughly a decade, one response to these from within the 'aid industry' has been the partnership discourse (Morrell, 2005a).

2.2.2. The partnership discourse

The current language of partnership implies that development aid now should be conducted between equal 'partners' and the terminology of donor and receiver therefore needs to be abandoned. Hence, it has a strong moral dimension by questioning the paternalism in aid, and by claiming that power and influence should be returned to receiving states or NGOs by ceasing to impose the visions of donors. There is also an instrumentalist dimension based on the idea that aid needs to become more sustainable. This is believed to be achieved through emphasising 'ownership', whereby receiving partners should take responsibility for their own development and partners on both sides should work towards the same goals and communicate transparently.

At present, the partnership discourse encompasses the entire range of development institutions, including governments, multilateral agencies and NGOs, even though not all have an explicit partnership policy (Motha, 2006: 3, 6; Oriel, 2005: 69; Parker, Levett, Kottler & Burmann, 1997). The language of partnership is used with reference to multiple relationships among stakeholders in the 'aid industry', i.e. not merely between donors and recipients but also between collaborating NGOs. As Alan Fowler puts it: 'Today's rule of thumb in international development is that everybody wants to be a partner with everyone else on everything, everywhere' (Pattman, 2005: 3).

In practice, several researchers have shown that the ideals of non-paternalistic, equal relationships are difficult to realise. The basic economic inequalities between donors and recipients cannot be avoided by changing the terminology. Petersen has also revealed how old colonial and paternalistic notions still prevail, thereby contradicting with the new agenda (Petersen, 2003). Furthermore, it has been argued that the language of partnership fails to address conflicts and inequalities by being converted into a technical issue instead of genuinely questioning power relations (Pinkowsky, 2003). In short, the partnership discourse arguably obscures and fails to challenge power relations. Related to this, it also hides the fact that there are frequently opposing ideas about and interpretations of change and

‘development’ between partners (Pretorius, 2004). Yet, these critiques should not be conspiratorially interpreted as partnership being a matter of empty rhetoric while trying to mask true motives, since there is not necessarily a direct link between outcomes and intentions (Ratele, 2001: 7, 169). Similarly to the language of partnership, today there is also a common language of accountability in international development cooperation.

2.2.3. NGO accountability

In recent years, there has been a rapid growth in numbers and size of NGOs. They attract more funds and have a stronger voice in shaping public policy. In contemporary international development cooperation, civil society is ‘in’ and NGOs are, accordingly, very common recipients of aid, frequently recognised as the ‘voices of the poor’ (Hydén, 2006; Jordan & van Wemmen, 2006). When writing NGOs, INGOs (such as Engender Health in this study) are generally included. Hence, throughout the thesis I only refer to INGO as such when it is of importance to the argument that they, indeed, are international.

Critical voices have been raised in relation to this development. Many question the legitimacy of NGOs and ask the crucial question: ‘who do you represent?’ It has been suggested that they undermine national sovereignty and do not necessarily have a relationship to any real public. Why then should they assert such influential roles in political arenas? As part of this criticism, many, donors included, increasingly call for NGOs to be held accountable for their actions (Richter, 2006; Robinson, 2005: 3; Rweyemamu, 1999: 32; Sathiparsad, 2002: 113; Selikow, Zulu & Cedras, 2002; Silberschmidt, 2004; Skelton, 2001: 24).

While such a discourse on accountability has long been lacking among NGOs, a rising number now engage with these issues (Strebel, 1997: 5). There is a wide variety of definitions of accountability. According to Strebel it frequently involves a relationship between A and B, where A is accountable to B if they must explain their actions to B and could be negatively affected by B if B does not approve of the account (1997: 1). There is often a distinction made between upwards and downwards accountability. The former is, for instance, to donors, governments or others with power over the NGO in question, whereas the latter concerns accountability to those with less power who are affected by the NGO (ibid.: 5, 8). Both are based on a relational understanding of accountability. Parker, Levett, Kottler & Burmann, (1997) make a distinction between accountability as such a relational issue, on the one hand, and as an identity issue, on the other.

The former is about being answerable to and held responsible by certain stakeholders. By contrast, identity accountability is about being answerable to ideals and one's own sense of responsibility, namely taking responsibility for determining the organisational mission and values, and assessing one's performance in relation to one's goals. Identity accountability does not necessarily give any rights of accountability to stakeholders affected by the actions of the organisation, and the NGO can itself define whom they feel they are accountable to (Strong, De Vault C & Sayad, 1999; Swain, 2006: 4). The theory chapter now proceeds to its third and last topic, i.e. how gender and gendered power relations are dealt with in development thinking.

2.3. GENDER AND POWER IN DEVELOPMENT THINKING

Development aid inevitably intervenes in local power relations where they operate, whether unintentionally and unconsciously or with intent (Tersbol, 2003: 161, 171). Gendered power relations in aid have gained particularly much attention. In this section the development of different perspectives on gender and power within development thinking is introduced.

2.3.1. From WID to GAD

Initially, development thinking was in principal gender-blind. However, since the 1970s gender equality has attracted considerable attention within development research and international development cooperation to the extent that women gradually almost became 'the answer to everything' (Thorpe, 2002: 207). Roughly speaking, one usually distinguishes between two lines of thinking in this context: 'Women in Development' (WID) and 'Gender and Development' (GAD). The former, which was first articulated in the 1970s, is a liberal feminist framework which focuses on women's visibility, status and access to resources. When the WID approach dominated, women's projects and a women-only focus in research were on the top of the agenda. Any considerable amount of attention was paid neither to men nor to gendered power relations. This neglect of issues of power and conflict was questioned by the late 1970s and onwards by GAD theorists, who also considered power relations between different groups of people.

This definition obviously raises the question of how we know which actors have more or less power, which ultimately depends on how power is, defined (Titscher S Meyer M Wodak R & Vetter, 2000: 7). Women, based on e.g. class, ethnicity, age and sexuality (Totten, 2003: 47,

76; Vance, 1995: 60,71; West C & Zimmerman, 1991: 2, 12; Whitehead, 2001: 241). Yet, even this move to the GAD.

Framework ‘did little to shake the overwhelming preoccupation with women’ (Willig, 1999:15). It is not until the latter half of the 1990s that theorists and practitioners within this framework became increasingly interested in men and masculinities. This is further explored in the fifth chapter which contextualises the male involvement discourse. Below, I look at how GAD deals with issues of power and gender constructions.

2.3.2. Gender difference and power in GAD

Influenced by Foucault among others, some theorists currently call for a complex power perspective in GAD thinking. In line with this, Andrea Cornwall criticises what she argues is the ‘men as problem’ discourse underlying much of the GAD framework. According to her, it builds on two interlinked premises. Firstly, it is assumed that gender relations are one-dimensional power relations. Secondly, there is a ready association between men, masculinity and power which is so strong that all men are thought to have power, and all those with power are assumed to be men (Wilson & Ramphele, 1989: 21). This inevitably relies on a simplistic power analysis. Cornwall writes about the complexity of gendered power relations as follows:

None of us lives every moment of our lives in a state of subordination to others. And the relationships we have with people around us may be ‘gender relations’ in the sense that these are relationships in which gender makes a difference, but are in no sense merely one-dimensional power relations (1989: 10).

She argues that if one avoids seeing the relationship between men and power as fixed, but instead recognises its contingency, one is able to ‘focus on relations and positions of power rather than render maleness in itself powerful and problematic’ (1989: 23). This does not entail giving up feminist claims. Indeed, it is not to deny that many men occupy positions of power, but questions the assumption that all men have access to as well as would want to have access to those positions (Wilson & Ramphele, 1989: 12).

Essentialising men’s and women’s positions as perpetrators and victims, respectively, risks leaving men without much space to act, whereby men cannot be held accountable. Moreover,

such a perspective ignores women's complicity in oppressive structures and in the reproduction of inequitable gender relations (Wolpe, 2005: 23; Wood K Maforah F & Jewkes, 1998: 29; Wood & Jewkes, 2001: 46). In addition, such thinking in GAD is premised on and reproduces the dualistic view that humanity consists of two basic groups defined by sex. While a strategic use of the categories 'women' and 'men' indeed can be crucial in struggles for gender justice, it is important to avoid constructing an oppositional distinction between 'women' and 'men' which fails to acknowledge the diversity of real men and women (Xaba, 2001: 24; Zierler S & Krieger, 1997: 37).

3. METHODOLOGY, METHODS AND MATERIAL

In this chapter I present the research process on which this qualitative study is based, from the framing of the research problem, via selection of discourse theoretical framework and collection of empirical data, to the actual process of analysis. These issues are dealt with in the mentioned order. Methodological considerations are discussed continuously.

3.1. BACKGROUND TO SELECTION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM AND CONTEXT

There are three main background factors explaining how I came to choose the specific research problem, research questions and context of this study. This section treats each in turn, namely my personal background, the conclusions drawn in my previous Post graduate diploma in HIV/AIDS Management's course. HIV/AIDS management course inspired a lot and was more challenging after I graduated in 2008 in Post Graduate Management of HIV/AIDS. To cut the use of more funds in this study I decided to do my research in my living area so as to encounter less obstacles/hindering. I didn't feel I was competent enough till I contacted all people contributed in this research. Moving from Radiography career and decide to advancing in HIV/AIDS Career my close colleagues thought I was going mad as they knew how much did I love my Radiography career and I realized I had to prove that I was not mad.

Deciding to stay away from my house and leave my family sounded abnormal but I knew that my wife was having faith with me because staying alone would be a good idea to have time to concentrate to the study. I arranged to stay at my friend's house who is working very far in Durban and I stayed with two foreign Nigerian guys who are street hawkers who are renting my friend's house (the whole day they are spending their time in Butterworth streets selling

their goods and they only come back at night) We all had our own reasons to be in this house and in spite of all our different experiences, goals and cultures we got along well and I made friends for life in this Cuba township. I had a wonderful time and the bad things mentioned above are just a note in the margin. Before I went to Cuba Township there were many things I worried for car hijacking statistic was high and my car couldn't be in garage the two guys I was staying with were having cars too, so mine was to be parked outside the garage. I did not expect to be treated any differently because I was a friend of the Landlord. In Cuba Township walking on your own as a stranger it won't take long time until someone is speaking to you, flirting with you, asking you questions and so on. In the beginning I thought the attention was pretty nice but after a while I got tired of not being able to go outside my apartment and just be on my own.

Just as the house I lived in, Butterworth is a diverse town with many cultures living side by side, but it has not always been like that. The remains of apartheid are still visible today. In Butterworth there are half a million people living and the differences in economy, gender, class and skin-colour are clearly visible. There are some few "whites" and a lot of "blacks" and the difference between them are depressing to see. The city spreads from homeless people via townships to fancy nightclubs (Drop Inn Night Club) and few shopping malls for the community. The situation that some of the people I met lived in Yako Squatter Camp, the conditions are so bad no one can like them. Even though living in Butterworth was hard from time to time I have to admit it also was the most amazing experience I have had in my life so far I started staying after my graduation as a qualified Radiographer in 1990. Therefore I have experience in staying there as a person. Initially I thought that the education ratio was lower than it is that people in townships had much less information than people living in the city and that HIV was not very noted in society at all. My expectations were all wrong and I soon realized that the root to the HIV problem was something else than poor education and silence.

3.2. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The power perspective clarified in the previous theory chapter, which emphasises the complexity of power in human relations, is intrinsically connected to the development of discourse theory. Since I am interested in how power relations are articulated, resisted and reproduced in the male involvement discourse, I consider discourse analysis to be a suitable methodology for this study. This choice is based on what I argue is its potential in exploring power relations as well as in studying linguistic and non-linguistic practices in tandem. In this

section I have a closer look at the concept of discourse and the framework chosen which is inspired, in particular, by the influential discourse theorists Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe and Foucault. To begin with, I give a brief definition of discourse as well as consider the issue of discourse and practice. In relation to this, it is explained how I approach non-linguistic practice in the analysis. The following section deals with the conflicting nature of discourse, paying attention to agency and resistance as well as to how subject positions are constituted and negotiated. Lastly, I describe how I go about delimiting discourses in relation to my data.

3.2.1. An introduction to discourse

Discourse can in this context be defined as a certain way to think about and understand the world. Put differently, it is a temporary closure of meaning which implies an exclusion of other potential meanings. Hence, there are limits determining whether particular ideas and practices should be considered true, reasonable or even possible (Van Dijk, (2001a: 13; Van Dijk, 2001b: 7). Yet, in accordance with Foucault's understanding of power as productive rather than merely constraining, discourse is not only limiting human thought and action, but also producing these very thoughts and actions (Van Dijk, 2001a: 12).

It is important to explore the material anchoring of discourse and to determine how to approach non-linguistic practices in the analysis. According to Laclau and Mouffe, discourse should be seen as practice and all practice as discursive. Viewing discourse as constitutive of the social, it defines practice as it makes various actions possible and others not. Moreover, all practice is associated with the production of meaning (Ulin, Robinson, Tolley & McNeil, 2002; Thomson, 2002: 25; Taylor, 2001a: 22; Taylor, 2001 b: 44). Therefore, this study does not solely deal with linguistic aspects of the male involvement discourse, but it also looks at how these notions and meanings inform practices within the organisations.

The underlying gender and power analyses employed by the actors in focus here are institutionalised and materialised, and these aspects of discourse should preferably not be silenced or excluded from analysis (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 1999: 12). However, due to the main reliance on interviews and that most observations were not relevant enough in relation to my research questions; my data are fairly limited concerning non-linguistic discursive practices. The extent to which I do analyse such practice, I focus on how arguments regarding the relationship between organisations focusing on men and the women's movement are

intentionally translated into actual collaborations and structures in the NGOs, as well as the role of donors in relation to this.

Thereby, I analyse the gender and power analyses underlying the non-linguistic practices my interviewees describe. Yet, my data is too limited to analyse potential gaps between rhetoric and practice concerning partnerships with women's organisations, which some research participants have indicated exist among certain NGOs. Moreover, I do not look further into how power structures, underlying power analyses and potential conflicts are reflected in actual collaborations and other non-linguistic practices. Concerning the analysis of linguistic discursive practices, however, I pay a great deal of attention to conflict and resistance.

3.2.2. Conflict, agency and resistance

Foucault is mainly interested in identifying larger regimes of knowledge and how discourses live themselves out through people, rather than in how people actively employ discourses. This does, however, not necessarily mean that he neglects human agency. More accurately, he argues that people, given the right circumstances, are able to critically analyse and claim or resist the discourses framing their lives. Social change is enabled by opening up marginalised discourses, which are important sources of resistance. Thereby, alternatives to the dominant discourse are provided (Terre Blanche M & Durrheim, 1999: 78, 120). According to Foucault, not only power, but resistance too, exists everywhere in society; 'there are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised' (Foucault, 1984a: 142; Mills, 2001: 37; TerreBlanche & Durrheim, 1999: 69, 79, 110).

Accordingly, the premise that power relations are 'everywhere' does not imply that there is no space for resistance. This is not a contradiction, as sometimes assumed, since power 'never [can] be as total, coherent and exhaustive as to preclude resistance occurring within its own space' (Strong De Vault & Sayad, 1999: 191). In brief, Foucault deconstructs the dualistic view of 'Power versus Resistance' (ibid. 168, 177). Paying attention to human agency opens up the possibility of viewing discourse as less homogenous. Accordingly, discourse should be perceived as sites of contestations of meaning as even the most powerful discourse is open to resistance and different interpretations (Mills 2001: 12, 114). Following Laclau and Mouffe, among others, I concentrate on this conflictual nature of discourse. In their view, discourse analysis should aim at mapping out the processes in which we contend

for the ways in which meaning is fixed. Some of these fixations become so conventionalised that we consider them natural, but meaning can never be permanently fixed (Strydom, 2002: 32). Instead, there are always cracks and weak points in a certain discourse, and dominant positions are continually under implicit threat from others.

Foucault argues that it is by studying this implicit resistance in one discourse or position that one can uncover the power implicit in another. Rather than analysing a specific power relation and its rationality on its own, one can locate and explore power by studying the resistance to it (Foucault, 1986: 178; Sunderland & Litosseliti, 2002: 69, 110). I use this perspective as an analytical tool when studying ambivalences in the male involvement discourse in order to reveal how power relations are articulated in the discourse.

Understanding discourse as conflictual is also fruitful when looking at identity constructions. The concept of ‘subject position’ is used here to refer to this production of identity. This is a conflictual process whereby identities are constructed, negotiated and resisted, since we may claim, accept or resist the subject positions on offer. The way the concept of positioning is used in this thesis recognises both the power of discourse to frame and constrain the identities made available and people’s potential to actively engage with those discourses and thereby negotiate subjectivity. Put differently, I analyse both how the male involvement discourse constitutes certain gendered subject positions, and how particular gendered positions are resisted and adopted in the texts by drawing upon particular arguments within the discourse (Sunderland & Litosseliti, 2002; Silverman (2000: 2001: 115; Reproductive Health Research Unit, 2004).

These could be other potentially interesting research topics. Yet, it would require observations of actual collaborations, such as consultative meetings and work which is carried out in collaboration, to which I did not get sufficient access during my fieldwork.

3.2.3. Defining and delimiting discourses

In Foucault’s view, it is crucial to avoid employing a simplistic understanding of discourse as merely groupings of statements linked to either a theme or a certain institutional setting (such as disciplines, authorities or professions). Moreover, discourses are open-ended and related to other discourses as well as being regulated by these relations (Mills, 2001: 43). Given this, how can one know where one discourse ends and another begins? Marianne Winther

Jørgensen and Louise Phillips suggest that this problem can be solved by treating discourse as an analytical concept, i.e. as constructs of the researcher rather than as objects in the real world for the researcher to identify. This implies delimiting discourses strategically in relation to the aim of the study. It does not, however, mean that anything could be defined as a discourse, or that they lack actual content. Rather, one needs to demonstrate why it is a reasonable delimitation, based on previous research and one's own data (Potter, 2003: 137, 140).

During the process of analysis I identified several potential discourses in my material. I found various positions concerning to what extent and for what reasons one should create linkages between men's and women's gender activism, different ways of relating to the notion of gender difference, as well as a language of partnership and accountability. All of these could, arguably, be demarcated as discourses. I hesitated over whether to elaborate with several discourses or with one and explore tensions and different positions within it. Given the irregularities and ambivalence found, I chose to focus on one in order to avoid ending up concentrating on categorising various statements into different discourses and thereby to some extent lose focus on my research questions. I use the concept of position to refer to those clusters of related arguments and practices within a certain discourse. I realised that all arguments appearing in my preliminary analysis were related to male involvement. Furthermore, I found a number of similarities between these and the different positions articulated in the literature on male involvement in a global context.

I therefore chose to analyse what I argue is a male involvement discourse with the limitation that I do so to the extent that it has links to arguments and practices related to the bridging of women's and men's gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS activism. To make this focus explicit from the start, I adjusted the purpose and research questions, which initially only mentioned views regarding such bridging without referring to a specific discourse. As demonstrated in the analysis chapter, the male involvement discourse overlaps with the partnership discourse and the currently common language of accountability.

3.3. FIELDWORK WITH GENDER, ANTIVIOLENCE AND HIV/AIDS ACTIVISTS IN BUTTERWORTH

During three months, from September to December 2007, I conducted fieldwork with gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS organisations in South Africa for the purpose of this thesis. The

concept of position, as defined here, should thus not be confused with the concepts of 'subject position' and 'positioning' discussed in section 3.2.2, above. However, they are obviously related. Drawing on and constructing a certain position within a discourse implies a positioning, i.e. that subject positions (identities) are constituted and negotiated.

Potentially, this could be conceptualised as an 'accountability discourse'. However, I have chosen not to understand accountability as a discourse on its own here, primarily as the ways in which the concept is used in this context clearly have major similarities to the partnership discourse. Hence, I argue instead that this language of accountability is part of the partnership discourse in my material, interviews with key persons in the field. In this section I describe how I went about selecting organisations, methods, interviewees, observation settings and documents, as well as the process of gathering data. I begin by explaining on which grounds I selected the NGOs. This is followed by one section each on the three sources of data, i.e. written sources, participatory observations and semi-structured interviews.

3.3.1. Selection of organisations

There are a number of NGOs in South Africa which focus on work with men on gender, antiviolenace and or HIV/AIDS. When planning my fieldwork I contacted a few, as well as similar organisations and programmes in other Southern African countries.¹⁴ The ones I got the most positive and helpful response from were Sonke and Engender Health, which both proved to be good cases to study. First of all, they are currently two of the major stakeholders in work with men in South Africa. Engender Health is a pioneer in this field in South Africa as it is the main founder of the MAP network. Sonke was founded in 2006, but it has in a short period of time grown tremendously and has extended national and international networks. Initially, I also thought the differences between the two would be interesting for comparison, given my intended focus on international development cooperation.

Engender Health is a large INGO which relies almost solely on foreign funding, approximately half of which is from the U.S. Government through United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) (Ntanyiya, personal correspondence). By contrast, Sonke is a South African NGO and has a more diversified funding from private foundations, UN agencies, the South African government and bilateral donors (Sonke 2008b). In spite of these and other differences, a focus on comparing the two did not prove fruitful as I decided to pay less attention to aid than

initially planned. Moreover, there turned out to be major similarities between the two in regard to their perspectives on their relation to the women's movement.

These similarities are likely to be partly due to the overlap of Sonke and Engender Health, whereby several of Engender Health's employees (including the country director) and consultants left to co-found and or work for Sonke. Both Engender Health and Sonke are committed to work together with women and in collaboration with women's rights organisations. Three of Engender Health's and Sonke's partner organisations focusing on women were also included in the study, although to a somewhat lesser extent; these are POWA, Masimanyane and Yabonga, and they were selected on the basis of the contacts I was provided by my contact persons from Engender Health and Sonke.

The fact that all NGOs included in the study to some extent work with both men and women as well as engage in collaborations across the gender binary, obviously affects the results of the study. This is not a problem given that the purpose of the thesis is to explore the bridging of men's and women's gender activism. Yet, the reader should be aware that far from all gender, antiviolenace and HIV/AIDS organisations focusing on men and women respectively have a similar commitment to working together across the gender divide. Hence, they do not necessarily share the same belief in work with men, work with women or partnerships between the two. Consequently, if doing research with such organisations, a different set of research questions would be necessary.

It was therefore early in the research process that I defined an investigation of such organisations as being outside the scope of this study. Apart from Engender Health and Sonke, I also contacted Hope Worldwide (South Africa), Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa (PPASA, South Africa), Padare (Zimbabwe) and RFSU's YMEP programme (Zambia, Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania).

A further background to the selected NGOs is given in 5.2.2. As this thesis is based on a study of five specific NGOs in South Africa, the conclusions drawn are not likely to apply to all gender, antiviolenace and HIV/AIDS organisations focusing on men and women respectively. Yet, I argue that the results indeed have a more general relevance. The particular people I met in this particular South African context as well as the particular documents I have analysed, indeed draw on more general discourses which clearly have

global dimensions (Potter & Wetherell, 2001: 29). I demonstrate this by linking the analysis to the contextualising of the male involvement discourse and the partnership discourse with its language of accountability.

3.3.2. Written sources

I studied these to get a background understanding before entering the field, as well as to deepen my understanding during the process of analysis. I refer to some of them in the analysis, but only chose two texts for the actual in-depth discourse analysis. These were included on the basis that they explicitly discuss links between men's and women's gender, antiviolenace and HIV/AIDS activism. The first one is selected parts of the 161 pages long EngenderHealth guidebook *Men as Partners Programme: Promising Practices Guide* (Neuman, 1997). Being based on interviews with staff, volunteers and beneficiaries of the MAP programme partners, it discusses lessons learnt from the implementation of MAP in South Africa. Moreover, it includes extracts from group interviews with and quotes from a number of people within the network (ibid. About the Promising Practices Guide). The second text is a case study of Masimanyane Men's Programme by Interfund (Interfund undated: 54), based on a reading of documents as well as semi-structured interviews with staff members in 2002. When I decided to link my research topic to the male involvement discourse at large, I realised that several of the other documents would be potentially interesting for detailed analysis as well. However, at that stage I had enough material already. Another way to get a background understanding of the field, besides studying various documents, was to conduct observations at the chosen NGOs.

3.3.3. Participatory observations

By participating in 'natural situations' and continuously asking questions to research participants, my understanding of the context evolved with time. This was also the main purpose of conducting observations, i.e. to get to know 'the field'. My contact persons from Sonke and EngenderHealth assisted me in getting access to relevant meetings and workshops. I did not select the observation settings, but participated in all I was referred to and could get access to for practical reasons such as time and place.

All in all I conducted seven participatory observations of meetings; workshops and a demonstration. Mostly, I did not participate actively in these, but instead concentrated on continuously writing field notes.

Working collaboratively, mainly in English, some mixed with Xhosa and Afrikaans to a limited degree. In these cases the workshop facilitators frequently paraphrased in English. I wrote extended notes only after observing a round table meeting with Sonke and nearly twenty donors as I judged this to be of particular value for my analysis. These notes were also included in my in-depth discourse analysis. However, the other meetings and workshops were still of great importance, giving me crucial background information and allowing me to get to know the context better.

Of most importance in this regard was a two day MAP workshop with the men's group Men In Action at Walter Sisulu University in East London, arranged by Engender Health (observation 3), as well as a three day One Man Can workshop with inmates and staff at George Correctional Centre being part of Sonke's prisons project. When I later on decided to analyse the male involvement discourse at large, I realised that these two observations could in fact have been useful to analyse in-depth as well. However, the notes were generally not detailed or clear enough for discourse analysis and, moreover, I had more than enough material already. Occasionally, I do refer to them in the analysis though. While observations helped deepen my understanding of the context, the main method used in this study was semi-structured interviews.

3.3.4. Semi-structured interviews

The qualitative semi-structured interview is often a useful method if aiming at understanding how people in a chosen field experience and interpret the world. It allows the researcher to register unexpected answers, follow up interesting topics and ask again if meaning is unclear (Neuman, 1997). In addition, to conduct interviews was in my case necessary as I could not get access to enough naturally occurring data (observations or texts) to be able to answer my research questions about bridging women's and men's gender activism.

My contact persons at Sonke and EngenderHealth referred me to potential interviewees within their respective organisations as well as representatives of their donors and women's organisations they collaborate with. From the number of contacts I got, ten were selected which I intended to conduct semi-structured interviews with. The selection was partly based on practical reasons, i.e. which persons it was possible to meet during my time in the respective South African cities.

Most of all, however, I aimed at interviewing key persons in different positions who are strategically located in the discursive field and thereby have a general view of the field (Paechter, 2001: 244). For these reasons I interviewed both representatives of organisations focusing on men, women's rights organisations and donors; both staff and persons in leading positions; and lastly, both men and women.

The donor representatives interviewed were from Sida and USAID, both important donors of EngenderHealth. An additional interview with a representative of Ford Foundation, funding both Sonke and EngenderHealth, was planned but unfortunately cancelled. This implies that no interviews were conducted with representatives of any of Sonke's donors. All in all, I interviewed three men and six women. I would argue that this potential 'bias' of including more women than men as interviewees is compensated for by the inclusion of the EngenderHealth guidebook, with interviews with and quotes from a number of male gender activists. Moreover, workshop facilitators and the large majority of workshop participants were men (Paechter, 2001).

Given the aspect of the thesis which focuses on international development aid, I only selected representatives of foreign donors and not anyone from South African governmental donors. Approximately 50 per cent of South African Engender Health's funds are from the US government through USAID/PEPFAR, whereas Sida's support accounts for about 11 per cent of the total budget (Ntanyiya, personal correspondence).

However, I did observe a round table meeting with Sonke and a some of their actual and potential donors, as described in 3.3.3. Even though most informants did not consider it necessary to anonymise their interviews, I chose to do so for ethical reasons. My choice was based on what I understand as tensions and a certain level of distrust between different actors in the field as well as some criticism raised. To avoid naming the NGOs was, however, not a feasible alternative given the fairly limited number of similar NGOs in South Africa. Partly in order to somewhat increase the anonymity of some of the interviewees, I decided not to mention their gender. This is also in line with my theoretical perspective, as it draws attention to how gender is constructed in the texts rather than positing gender categories as given.

The interviews were approximately one hour long and mostly conducted alone with the interviewee. All were in English except from the one with the representative of Sida, which was in Swedish. The interviews were semi-structured and followed interview guides which

were continuously developed along the way, based on the understanding I had gained from the literature review, readings of NGO documents, as well as previous interviews and observations. I also sought to adjust the interview guide to different positions of the interviewees. When conducting the interviews I found it difficult to draw attention to a number of topics and levels without making the actual interviews too structured and thereby not letting the interviewees talk freely enough. Partly as a consequence of this, this thesis focuses more on gendered power relations than initially intended, as these are more directly linked to the research topic.

Unfortunately, it does so at the expense of intersecting power relations based on 'race', ethnicity, sexuality, class and Global North/Global South which were initially included in the purpose of the thesis. Out of these, however, I do pay attention to power relations between the Global North and the Global South when there is an obvious intersection of these and gendered power relations. This corresponds to my research question about the role of international development cooperation in relation to the bridging of women's and men's gender activism. Yet, as previously mentioned, I draw less attention to aid than initially planned, for reasons linked to my interview data. Not only was an interview with a donor cancelled, but some of my interviewees were also not sufficiently familiar with current discussions on donors specifically in relation to the bridging of men's and women's gender activism. In addition, one interview was cut short before we got the chance to discuss issues of international development cooperation in-depth (interview 5).

Lastly, my interviewee from USAID had limited knowledge about the discussions on and practices of collaborations between organisations focusing on men and women's rights organisations (interview 9). In short, similarly to the documents analysed, the interviews did not contain enough data about the role of donors in relation to my research questions, for this topic to remain a main focus of the thesis.

The interviews were recorded and all except one (interview 9) were transcribed. I judged that this specific interview would not be useful enough as the interviewee was not very familiar with the research topic. Hence, I did not analyse it in-depth, unlike the rest of the interviews. A great deal of interpretation is done already when transcribing. I decided not to write down word for word exactly what was said, including for instance stammering, hemming and hawing, since this inevitably would create hybrids neither corresponding to the oral

conversations nor producing a text which would do justice to the interviewees (Paechter, 2001: 149).

Moreover, the kind of discourse analysis I undertook did not involve strict linguistic analysis. Therefore I chose an intermediate position instead, giving the transcriptions a fluent language and still trying to change as little as possible. The interview transcripts were then analysed together with the selected documents and field notes, a process described below. One exception is the interview with a representative of Yabonga where a MAP facilitator from EngenderHealth also was present as it was conducted in connection to a workshop which s/he facilitated at Yabonga. While this obviously is not ideal, I got the impression that the interviewee from Yabonga still could speak rather freely, also about organisations focusing on men. The quotes from this specific interview included in the analysis have therefore been translated into English.

3.4. THE PROCESS OF ANALYSIS

The process of analysis, interpretation and reflection is continuous and began during observing, interviewing, transcribing, writing field notes, discussing and reading. This section deals with how I carried out the actual in-depth analysis of selected texts. I began with reading and rereading interview transcripts, field notes and documents, seeking to identify relevant themes in relation to my research questions. Quotes and comments were coded and divided into categories, on which the first preliminary analysis was based (Ndashe, 2005: 122).

Initially, I asked fairly concrete and specific questions to the data. I tried to understand how research participants look at the relationships between men's and women's gender activism and comprehend meanings of central concepts such as accountability and partnership. I then realised that I needed to distance myself further from the texts, ask more discourse analytical questions and see discourse as less homogenous. At this stage, which represents a movement from the particular to the general, I decided to structure the analysis around ambivalences in the discourse. This also implied a stronger focus on power and resistance, thus in line with the research questions. In addition, I began to recognise the links (commonalities and tensions) between, on the one hand, arguments about partnerships between organisations focusing on men and women's rights organisations and, on the other hand, the male involvement and partnership discourses at large. Writing the literature review and the

analysis chapter was a somewhat simultaneous process as both implied attempting to identify important themes and assumptions in the discourses articulated. Indeed, literature review is a critical undertaking and thereby a kind of qualitative analysis as well (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005: 31).

The results of this study obviously depend not only on the questions asked during interviews, but importantly also on the questions asked to the actual texts (Morrell, 2005b: 195, 201). A number of discourse analytical questions were asked to the data after having decided to focus on the male involvement discourse, such as: Where are assumptions shared and taken for granted and where are definitions contested? How are the different positions constructed in the discourse related to each other? How are men and women constituted as gendered subjects by the discourse, and how do the research participants engage with or potentially resist these subject positions? Who draws on which positions in the discourse, and how is this related to power relations in the field? Moreover, it is important to ask questions about my own role in producing discourse, a topic discussed in the next section, which also raises power relations in the research process.

3.4.1. Reflexivity

Researchers pay increasing attention to reflexivity, which implies considering one's own role in the research process and in relation to research participants. It frequently also means using one's theories to understand one's own research practices (Morrell, 2006: 180; Morrell R Moletsane, Abdool Karim, Epstein & Unterhalter, 2002: 156). There are various aspects of this. Firstly, I consider power relations in the research process, followed by a discussion on how discourse and knowledge is jointly produced by researcher and 'researched'.

Lastly, I position myself and briefly discuss how my personal and political identities and values might have influenced the research. One aspect of reflexivity is to consider power relations in the research process (Morrell R & Ouzgane, 2005: 111). Development research carried out by westerners frequently face particularly severe criticism regarding the reproduction of hierarchies (Morrell & Richter, 2006: 2). This ethic dilemma is something I continuously struggle with. Yet, I argue that the male involvement discourse and creating links between male and female gender activists clearly have global dimensions, and to analyse these is of global interest. At least to some extent, I have also employed a critical perspective towards development aid and thereby taken the role and power of the Global

North into consideration in the analysis. To suggest that research carried out by people from the Global North in the Global South is at all times exploitative is, moreover, based on a simplistic understanding of power. As Regina Scheyvens and Donovan Storey argue, the researcher rarely controls the entire research process and research participants can exercise 'research resistance', for instance by withholding information (Pattman, Frosh & Phoenix, 2005: 5).

In addition, the intersection of various factors such as age, gender, class, nationality and 'race' as well as position in the gender and SRHR field and position in the research project (as researcher or 'researched') contributed to the power relations between me and research participants being even more complex. Unlike much of development research, I can therefore not say that I consistently researched neither 'down' nor 'up'. Nevertheless, at the end of the day I was the one to finally decide research questions and draw conclusions from the material, and thereby I had the final power over knowledge production (Leclerc-Madlala, 1999: 28). I sought to create a dialogue with research participants in order to deal with this, for instance by asking for feedback on my problem formulation in the beginning as well as on a preliminary version of the thesis (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001: 181).

Another aspect of reflexivity is to recognise that knowledge and discourse is always jointly produced by the researcher and interviewee in the actual interview setting (Leclerc-Madlala, 2003a: 120; Leclerc-Madlala, 2003b: 3, 25; Lesejane, 2005: 152, 157). I have therefore aimed at contextualising interview extracts in the analysis chapter. By including or referring to my questions I intend to enable the reader to make relevant interpretations of the data her/himself.

Like everyone, I do not have access to a position outside discourse (Lesejane, 2006: 56). While the context of my fieldwork was partly new to me and while I have tried to distance myself from the male involvement and partnership discourses, I also draw on and hence reproduce them. I do so both as an interviewer and as the author of this text. Indeed, the starting point of this research project was very much in line with the intersection of the male involvement and partnership discourses. In brief, it was based on the premises that work with men and male gender activism are possible and necessary but need to be in partnership with the women's movement, partly in order to avoid some of the assumed pitfalls of work with men.

To consider one's own personal and political values which inform the research, another crucial aspect of being reflexive, enables the reader to better understand and judge the claims made (Lindegger G & Maxwell, 2005: 157; Ludsin & Vetten, 2005: 5). My feminist conviction and my belief in the explanatory potentials of conceptualising power as complex, have obviously influenced the ways I have interpreted and (together with the research participants) produced the data. As postcolonial and feminist methodological approaches often emphasise, it is also of importance to position oneself in the research process in relation to one's privileges and lack of privileges, linked to our history and context. Although my subject positions as a white, middle class, queer, Swedish, young woman do not provide me with predefined interpretational frameworks, there is a history of colonialism, racism, (hetero) sexism and privileges in which these subject positions influence which discourses I have access to and draw on (Maart, 2000: 191; Mac an Ghaill, 1994: 18, 29; MacNaughton, 2005: 13; Madriz, 2000: 92, 126; Makahye, 2005: 3; Mannathoko, 1992: 44). My aim is to produce transparent and 'accountable' knowledge, whereby I recognise that this text is indeed not politically neutral. Rather, through discursive practices it both challenges and (unintentionally) reproduces power relations, both of which I am fully responsible for.

4. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

4.1. INTERVIEWS IN RESERVOIR HILL EXTENSION

After approximately one month I was able to meet with my first interviewee. I had told a housemate of mine about my problem with finding people to interview for my assignment so she spoke with a woman at her work (she was doing an internship at a health centre) and came home one day and gave me the business card of a woman named Sarah. After I contacted Sarah I met with her three times. The first time she wanted to meet with me to do a "test-interview" so we could get to know each other and so that I could present the assignment and my purpose. I was so stressed up before the interview and I probably pressured. In comparison with my earlier interviews I have had this was a dream. This woman knew what she wanted and she was not afraid of showing it. We spoke for one hour and a half and I felt like I had material to write a whole book. The next interview I had with her, which according to her was supposed to be the real one, I used to double check the first one and to dig deeper in all the rich points that I found when I went through the first interview I had with Sarah. This time I was equally stressed if not worse in comparison to the first time so I told her that I was nervous. And she insisted I must calm down I got sad, not

because that she had offended me in any way but because she assumes that white people do not speak to or are not friends with black people. She told me to calm down and when I did we started the interview.

Sarah is a woman with a strong opinion and a big heart. She cares for those less fortunate and she told me that her family gets upset with her since a lot of her salary goes to air time, so she can talk to her friends and clients, and they also get upset with her since she herself is ill and they think that she should rest and not work so much, but as she said – change must come from somebody. When I asked her why she thought the spread of HIV/AIDS is so fast and out of control Sarah said that society's social problems is the core of the HIV problem. Things that she mentioned was ability to read among the people, the access to proper health care, poverty (which leads to many other problems such as alcoholism, violence, sexual abuse and so on), unemployment and poor education. And the most important factor is that people are not accepting reality for what it is. She said that when an individual cannot admit for herself that she is ill and needs treatment, how is she able to tell her family and friends? Sarah also said that the church in rural areas does not have enough knowledge and the knowledge that exists (old and new side by side) is sometimes contradicting itself. She mentioned one example that is strongly related to the spread of HIV.

In rural areas people have learnt that one should not have plastics in the bedroom since it can suffocate small children that are left unattended. Condoms are made out of plastic and should therefore not be kept in the bedroom, what is worse – given that plastics can suffocate children – what will happen to the penis if you wrap a condom made of plastics around it? It probably will suffocate and no longer be useful. A reason to the spread that I mentioned earlier in the text is poverty and unemployment and here Sarah could see the difference in colour of the skin. Getting good treatment is not always easy and the difference here is that white people, although are few go to private clinics to get the best help possible while the black people (in the townships) cannot afford anything else but the help that is given to them. Another thing that is due to the poverty is the horrible choice Sarah told me that people had to make every day. She told me about the grant that people infected by HIV get (that is based on a CD4 count). When a person is sick and very poor (and in many cases has a family or children to support as well) and is given money as long as the person remains sick – that individual will stay sick so he or she does not have to suffer from the famine. Sarah told me there are several ways to keep the CD4 levels down. She brought up having sex with another

HIV positive person, drinking alcohol, smoking, using drugs, not getting enough rest and lack of (healthy) food. The problem that she recognises with this is that no matter how you try to solve this without solving the poverty first it is going to end up in a negative spiral. When people get infected by HIV, they get depressed and ways to handle the depression is for many to drink alcohol and an outcome from drinking much alcohol is to do irresponsible things such as having unprotected sex. When a woman has had unprotected sex or sex at all with someone that is not in a relationship with her she is considered to be promiscuous and therefore she would not be willing to talk about it or seek help to prevent the HIV from developing into AIDS. Another thing connected to sex is the body and Sarah told me that the body is something that is a great taboo within the black cultures in South Africa.

Sarah and I also talked a bit about the myths and misunderstandings that surrounds HIV and does it even harder to talk about. She told me that a lot of people in South Africa in particular and the African continent in general argue that HIV is invented by the white man as a means to destroy sex. She said that AIDS when it comes to this idea is short for American Influence of Destroying Sex. Besides blaming the white man for the virus itself, there are still many that believe that witchcraft plays a strong role in the spread. Sarah said to me that she thinks that education is the most important factor when we try to solve the problem. When I interviewed her in the spring of 2010 she was working with at least two different workshops. One of them was for HIV positive people without jobs, a course for them to be self employed so they can live a healthy life and another one focusing on men with HIV since there are few men in workshops and also she said that they generally have a harder time to admit for themselves and others that they are HIV positive.

4.2. INTERVIEWS IN MSOBOMVU TOWNSHIP

The interview took place in the township *Msobomvu* I met up with the health worker that I had been in contact with and we drove to a woman's home/children's day care centre. The day care centre was in a bungalow without any furniture – there were just a big box with toys inside and on the sand covered yard there were some partially covered tires. We went behind the day care centre to a shed (what I believe was her home) to do the interview. The shed had two rooms as far as I could see – it might have had more. In the room where we sat down there were a couch, two armchairs, one chair, a shelf with a TV, some books and what to me looked as a board game. The room was dark even though it was mid-day and the sun was shining. The woman from the health centre that I had been in contact with was sitting in on

the meeting and I didn't for her to join because I didn't want this study to be a private matter I was looking for advice as much as I can. In the beginning I felt like she was interrupting my interview but soon I realized that she was an asset to my work and that she had a lot of knowledge and experience.

Thandiwe, the woman I went to Msobomvu to interview, is 42 years old, single and a mother of two. She discovered that she was infected by HIV in 1993 when she went to the doctor to treat her tuberculosis. The doctor found out that it was not just tuberculosis but also syphilis and HIV. When the doctor told her that she had HIV she thought she would die and not live till this day. Thandiwe did not take any ARVs until the year 2000, which means she went without medicines and counselling for seven years. During this period of time she got rejected from her family, friends and neighbours and sadly enough this is not unusual. Thandiwe told me that she does not know why they reacted in that way but she thinks it is because they did not know enough and were afraid to get infected.

Thandiwe's youngest child is also HIV positive and she said to me that her neighbours did not allow their children to play with her youngest because Thandiwe was HIV positive something that they did say to her child. Thandiwe felt like she had to deny it because the stigma concerning HIV is so big. She told me that when she begun to take the ARVs her family took her back and also did her friends and neighbours. Now that she works as a counsellor for HIV positive people she told me that all the people that rejected her before nowadays go to see her for advice. Thandiwe thinks that the spread of HIV is caused by the poverty, myths and misunderstandings and stigma and she also told me about the funding of R1040.00 (Current SA Government disability grant) per month that HIV positive people get from the state to be able to buy healthy food and thereby get better. However because many people in South Africa with HIV are poor, they quickly become dependent on the funding that they get when they take ARVs.

Therefore, many poor HIV positive people try to keep down their CD4 levels by not taking their ARVs from time to time, engaging in unprotected sex with another HIV positive person and drinking a lot of alcohol that is known to weaken the immune system. For the poorest people this funding is the only source of income they have and that means that they will choose to destroy their bodies instead of going hungry. This is similar to young girls in South Africa who just let themselves pregnant so that they can get child support grant from

Government and they use this money for their private needs and leave their kids struggle to get food with their Grandmothers at home. This habit often happens in most rural areas of Eastern Cape (Willowvale, Centane, and Butterworth inclusive). My younger brother, *Buntu* is a Social Worker in the Mnquma Municipality Sub-district of Amatole Municipality District, stationed at Social Department in Butterworth likes to share with me these scenarios and also tells me how do they fix them: while mother of the child is waiting for deposit of the grant while in Cape Town for example here in Eastern Cape they just change the grant to be deposited to the grandmother who is living with the child. After that other girls do not even ashamed to insult their grannies and threaten them. Another reason to the spread that is connected to the stigma is the breastfeeding. Thandiwe told me that the mothers do not listen to what the doctors say to them and continue to give their children breast milk just because the stigma is too great not to do it. She told me that if a mother is not breastfeeding her child her family and friends will think she is sick – something that she absolutely does not want anyone to know because then they will reject her.

An idea of how one can heal oneself from HIV that Thandiwe mentions is the one where a man who rapes virgins is to be cured from the disease. She told me that this still is common even though there is so much information about HIV. Summing up, Thandiwe says that it is rapes and breastfeeding that cause the wide spreading of HIV/AIDS but she adds the unprotected intercourse without telling the partner about the own health status as the greatest cause for the spread. She also said that it is not unusual that women get drugged at a nightclub and then get raped. Even if are not raped when anybody is under the influence of liquor he/she is likely to make poor decision. Example if male and female agree to have recreational sex and they are drunk it is common that they both forget to think about using a condom. Even if one of them can remember he/she is scared to mention the advice because other partner will think the other partner is accusing the other one of being HIV/AIDS positive.

According to Thandiwe her picture of the disease has changed from not having any information about HIV and thinking she was as good as dead to working with HIV positive and being a counsellor. She said that all people nowadays have access to information about the disease – even those who are illiterate. Even though she said that everyone who wants information can get it, she and her organisation do not think that it is enough so they arrange campaigns two to three times per year. They do this because the teachers who are leading the

sexual education have difficulties talking about sex and they think that makes the education inadequate. The organisation that Thandiwe works for is organising workshops for youths but since not everybody is showing up there the woman from the health organisation wants to organize information meetings at the schools in the townships where she thinks it should be mandatory to attend. She thinks it is important to give enough information to the youths so that they can make wise decisions because it is among youths that the greatest spread of HIV occurs. The two women told me that within the black tribes in Africa there is a common taboo to talk about sex, the body and menstruation for example and this makes it hard to tell people that you are HIV positive and even talk about the disease. They also told me about so called circumcision schools where they send their young sons to get circumcised. This is not a school in a regular meaning but more of a *rite de passage* where the older men teach the young boys things that only men know. When they come home from there they are not children anymore – they are grownups. The big issue that this circumcision brings along is the unhygienic procedures that help the spread of HIV. Many circumcisers use the same instrument to circumcise the boys and often they do not clean them in between.

Thandiwe said that she choose to send her son to Durban to get circumcised because she thought that school was more secure. Furthermore Thandiwe said that she thinks that HIV positive people that do not want to talk about the disease many times are very selfish. She said that they have unprotected sex without telling their partner about their health status, they use the same needles as their friends because they want them to share their health status, they are unfaithful and so on. Now that Thandiwe is HIV positive herself she feels it is easier to reach to other infected people since she has gone through everything they have gone through. When I ask Thandiwe and the health worker about their feelings toward the government and their actions towards HIV they said that they are happy about the governments input in the struggle against HIV. They are happy about the financial support to the organisations, the free condoms, free ARVs and funding to those who are ill. The only thing they are waiting for is “The Cure”. They have a little different view on the future though – Thandiwe cannot really see that HIV will decrease while the woman from the organisation hopes and thinks it will.

4.3. INTERVIEWS IN IBIKA TOWNSHIP

The last interview I did was very emotional for me. I knew that I had to leave Cuba to Ibika which is about 10 km apart and all the people I love in just a couple of hours. I had the luck to be able to arrange the interview the day I left. Before the interview (it was quite late) I sat

down with the secretary, drank a cup of rooibos and felt my tears running down my cheeks. I then met with the loveliest woman, Xoliswa. She was 32 years old, born and raised in Centane (neighboring town of Butterworth) and she absolutely loved her job. Her whole being was sparkling and full of joy. She comes from a family of 11 with an aggressive father and a dependent mother and Xoliswa was not withholding that she disliked men. She mentioned the example of her mother and father and also one of her sisters with her husband and she said to me that she did not want to find herself in the same situation. She was not married and not educated although she came from a well educated family. She told me that some people said that she was bewitched and that was the reason why she wasn't married. In 2002 she discovered that she was HIV positive and also had tuberculosis. She was then dating and thought that her boyfriend should stand by her side but he did not. Xoliswa said that she was a real party animal at that time and lost a lot of weight.

When people asked she said it was power slim that had helped her. It is legitimate to lose weight for aesthetic reasons, but a weight loss caused by an illness such as HIV will therefore be "covered" as an intentional weight loss. Being young, slim and a party animal is seen by the society as positive traits and very few would suspect that a party animal is seriously ill. Eventually she could not hide her illness. As if tuberculosis and HIV wasn't enough she also got meningitis and for periods she was so ill that she couldn't even remember her own name. Xoliswa got really sick and went to Butterworth Medical Centre (Dr Mafuya & Associates) where she were about to meet a true friend and soul mate. The doctor that became her friend supported her through her suffering and Xoliswa could call him whenever she needed someone. Xoliswa told me that when she first came to Butterworth Medical Centre she was really sick. Her CD4 levels were so low that the doctors refused to give her the antiretroviral drugs because they were too strong for her at that moment. She said that she had to find a way without the ARVs to heighten her levels so she could get the medicine she needed.

With a lot of love from friends and family, the support from her doctor friend and her stubbornness she told me that she got her CD4 level from 69 till 118 without drugs and with the ARVs she now has 1150. She said it was a miracle and I agree. When Xoliswa managed to get her CD4 levels high she started to work with people sick from HIV as a peer educator. She loves her work and thinks it is very fulfilling and if she could chose career again she told me that she would choose this every time.

As I wrote before Xoliswa has had some bad experiences of men in her life and the main focus in this interview came rather natural – the gender aspect of HIV/AIDS. She told me that in Zitulele next to Coloured Township there are more people infected by HIV/AIDS than we know of. She said that she would estimate it to be one or two people in every household. In these households 80 percent of the women are not working and consequently totally dependent on their husbands. Xoliswa can see a big problem in this. If a man in the family is the only one that contributes to food for the children and providing shelter that will indicate that the woman in this family somehow have to stay with him so that her children will remain safe and do not have to starve. She will stay with this man even if he commits adultery or have a drug problem, which in turn means that she is willing to risk her own life and her future children's lives by letting him engage in things that are considered high risk when it comes to contract HIV. She blames this on the black culture and she said that according to it, it is considered manly and macho for a man to sleep with many women even when he is in a relationship and accordingly it is considered feminine to stay a virgin or at least not be promiscuous and be a monogamist. An extension of these stereotypes that she also brought up is the taboo for women to get a divorce.

Xoliswa and I also discussed the change of culture. She has a 16 years old daughter and a grandchild. Xoliswa told me that she did not know who the father of her grandchild was or if her daughter had been raped since her daughter refused to talk about it. Xoliswa said that the culture had changed since she herself was a teenager. Then people were more conservative about their own culture and the body was still a great taboo. Nowadays, she told me, the teenagers are becoming coconuts – black on the outside but white on the inside. She said that this cultural confusion and new experiments among the young ones are contributing to the spread of HIV/AIDS.

5. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The aim of this chapter is to draw conclusions by linking the findings in the previous analysis chapter to original problem formulation, research questions, theoretical perspective, literature review and methodology. I begin by returning to the starting point of the study, followed by a summary of some of the shared assumptions and values in the male involvement discourse analysed. In the next section I move on to further exploring the ambivalences found in the discourse by linking these to the overall analytical research question of how gendered power

relations are articulated, reproduced and resisted in the discourse. Subsequently, I summarise and discuss how these gendered power relations intersect with power relations between the Global North and the Global South in international development cooperation. Lastly, some final remarks about the general relevance of the study and conclusions drawn are provided.

There is a growing awareness globally of how the HIV/AIDS epidemic, one of the major political challenges of today, is linked to gender-based violence and gender inequality more generally. Rising attention is drawn to how certain constructions of masculinity contribute to the spread and impact of the epidemic. Working with women's empowerment is no longer considered enough. Instead, men need to become involved in gender equality work as well if we are to come to terms with the inequalities which HIV/AIDS and gender-based violence reflect and accentuate. Yet, there are also a number of concerns raised in relation to male gender activism and work with men. Some caution that the focus on power and women's disprivilege in gender work might vanish, others that the male involvement discourse risks becoming a discrete field disconnected from work with women and the women's movement.

For those reasons, among others, some call for building bridges between work with women and work with men, and between female and male gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS activism. This thesis has addressed these very links, i.e. between male gender activism and women's collective action and possibilities to continue defining objectives in the struggles against HIV/AIDS, gender inequality and gender-based violence. It has done so by analysing the global male involvement discourse in the context of the South African civil society and to some extent, by considering the role of international development cooperation.

There are a number of shared assumptions and values in the male involvement discourse analysed. Among the most essential ones are the recognition of gender inequalities, links between these, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS, as well as the role of masculinity constructions in relation to these. Gender equality is a shared value which is constantly strived for, and work with men is considered both a possible and necessary part of this struggle.

Moreover, partnerships across the gender divide are argued to be crucial in this work. I have demonstrated how the male involvement discourse overlaps with the partnership discourse in the civil society sector and international development cooperation at large. Pointing to the

conflictual nature of discourse, there are a number of ambivalences and discursive struggles in the intersection of these discourses.

5.1. GENDERED POWER RELATIONS ARTICULATED, REPRODUCED AND RESISTED

Throughout the analysis chapter I pointed at a number of ambivalences in the male involvement discourse, indicating tensions between different positions constructed in relation to building bridges between men's and women's gender activism. I argue that these themes of ambivalence are crucial to understand if intending to answer the overall analytical research question of this study, which follows: How are gendered power relations articulated, reproduced and/or resisted in the male involvement discourse in relation to the bridging of men's and women's gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS activism in South Africa? By returning to this question, I here attempt to explicitly link my findings to the theoretical and methodological perspectives I have found elucidative in relation to the data analysed.

My methodology has been inspired by Foucault's perspective that it is by analysing the implicit resistance in one discourse or position that one can uncover the power implicit in another. Accordingly, it is by studying the ambivalences in the overlapping male involvement and partnership discourses that I have been able to show how gendered power relations are reproduced in positions resisted in other positions. Hence, I have aimed at locating power relations mostly by looking at how certain positions implicitly or explicitly are resisted.

I have maintained that arguments for and practices of creating links between male and female gender activism, part of the partnership discourse and its language of accountability, frequently are a way of resisting gendered power relations potentially reproduced in the strong focus on male subjectivities in work with men. In the analysis chapter, I showed that such focus on male subjectivities and calls for women's representation should be seen in relation to each other.

There are some frictions between the two, which appear most evidently in the contention between arguments for women's leadership and shared leadership. Through collaboration with women's organisations and women's participation in work with men, women's voices, perspectives and experiences are included in work with men. This is a way of opposing work with men, which concentrates too much on men's experiences and feelings. Such criticism reveals the gender inequalities potentially reproduced in work with men, which tends to focus

on men per se rather than on their relation to women and hierarchical gender relations, thereby exploring men's gendered experiences at the expense of women's experiences and disprivilege.

While partnerships with women are a means to resist gendered power relations, this study has also pointed at how such inequalities are reproduced in these very partnerships. Inspired by research on power relations in the broader partnership discourse in international development cooperation (e.g. Eriksson Baaz 2005), I have pointed at a tension within this discourse between obscuring and recognising power relations in the partnerships. This discourse, as it is articulated in the intersection with the male involvement discourse, emphasises men's ability and willingness to change and to be women's equal partners in the joint struggle for gender equality.

Unity, solidarity, mutual goals and cooperation between organisations focusing on men and women's organisations are stressed. This often resembles the partnership discourse in international development cooperation at large. In spite of this type of rhetoric, however, there are also tensions in relation to creating links between women's and men's gender activism. I have pointed at the construction of two positions which challenge this language of mutual goals and equal partners, thereby revealing power relations.

Firstly, there is a tension between partnership and accountability. Both the broader partnership discourse and the ways in which the language of accountability is used in this context are means to criticise inequalities between partners by attempting to create non-paternalistic and equal relationships with mutual goals. However, I have argued that the language of accountability can be conceptualised as a position of resistance within the partnership discourse.

The reason for this is that it, in spite of its various and frequently not specified meanings, recognises gendered power relations in partnerships. This is the case, for instance, when arguing that accountability should not be mutual and that organisations focusing on men should follow the leadership of women in the gender struggle. The purpose of both is, indeed, to deal with gender inequalities in partnerships. Secondly, there is a position which emphasises male dominance in relation to bringing men in, either in their specific organisations or in the gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS sector at large. This position does

not only resist gendered power I argue that answers to the second and third, more specific, research questions are discussed and summarised as well when taking this broader question as a starting point for the discussion. Issues related to the third question concerning the role of development aid are raised in the following subsection on intersecting power relations.

Unlike the language of accountability (and the broader partnership discourse), it is a way of expressing distrust rather than solidarity, thereby also involving an emotional dimension. This understanding of male dominance to some extent justifies a somewhat separatist position, although marginal in the male involvement discourse, whereby the strong language of men and women working together is challenged to some extent.

By studying these two positions of resistance within the intersection of the partnership and male involvement discourses, this study has arguably demonstrated how these discourses disguises the fact that power relations exist in partnerships. Since it is stressed that men are able and willing to change and be women's equal partners or allies in a struggle with mutual goals, the fact that the structural contexts makes such equal partnership difficult to realise is arguably neglected. Thus, in so doing, they fail to challenge gendered power relations in the collaborative relations between organisations focusing on men and women's organisations.

By studying the resistance implicit in the language of accountability and arguments about male dominance, it is possible to locate power relations in partnerships frequently obscured by the partnership and male involvement discourses at large. These implicit criticisms should, however, not be conspiratorially interpreted as the language of being equal partners being a matter of empty rhetoric masking true (patriarchal) motives. After all, there is not necessarily a direct link between outcomes and intentions.

The ways in which the language of accountability and arguments concerning male dominance in the gender sector are employed do not only resist gendered power relations in work with men and partnerships with women. As demonstrated in section 6.4., many of the arguments and practices in the male involvement discourse and its intersection with the partnership discourse reproduce the gender binary as people's gender and positions in the gender struggle are constructed in a simultaneous process. They do so, not only by recognising structural inequalities between men and women, but arguably also in deterministic ways since they frequently build on assumptions about men and women as belonging to two different and somewhat homogenous categories.

They thereby fail to acknowledge the actual diversity of men and women, similar to the GAD discourse at large. Hence, the language of accountability and the position emphasising male dominance have in common not only the resistance to gendered power relations and to the tendency within the partnership discourse to obscure these; they also share assumptions of ready links between gender and certain standpoints or behaviours. For instance, while arguments for women's representation or leadership are means to resist gendered power relations, I have shown that they frequently also assume a direct connection between being a woman, knowing what is in the assumed collective interests of women and challenging sexist oppression.

Thus, it relies on the assumption that women have more or less the same homogenous perspectives and that these are sound per se. Related to this notion of women, there is an idea of men as more or less dominant and patriarchal per se, thereby presuming simple links between men, masculinity and power/dominance. Indeed, it is deterministic to presume that the structural fact that men often have certain privileges and take up positions of power in relation to women, makes it possible to predict men's discourse and practice. For women and men alike, our subject positions do not provide us with predefined perspectives or behaviours, even though we are positioned in a history and context of sexism and other hierarchies influencing which discourses we have access to and draw on.

I have also demonstrated how these gender stereotypes are contested. Both the gender binary as such and, more frequently, certain male and female subject positions constituted by the male involvement discourse are resisted. An analysis of how these deterministic understandings to a great extent are contested by male and female gender activists arguably reveals the power relations involved in the constructions of such subject positions. By emphasising men's ability and willingness to rethink masculinities and be equal partners as well as by drawing on the language of accountability, the subject position of the dominant male gender activist is resisted.

Similarly, the notion of women as a monolithic group challenging rather than reproducing gender hierarchies is contested. Representatives of women's organisations, moreover, position themselves against 'women's distrust', thereby negotiating the notion of the distrustful female gender activist. Hence, by drawing on certain arguments, activists continuously negotiate the subject positions constituted by the discourses they draw on. In

this conflictual process where gender identities are constructed, gender interests, too, are constituted and contested. This analysis corresponds to Foucault's perspective on discourse as not only negative and repressing, but also productive since it constructs, for instance, certain identities and knowledges (such as interests).

To conclude, corresponding to a Foucauldian perspective on power, I have shown in this thesis that gendered power relations are continuous, diffused and negotiated rather than simply being a matter of men exercising power over women. Simplistic models of causal relations between gender and power should thus be avoided. Instead of viewing power relations as fixed in relations between individuals or groups, they are continuously negotiated and individuals simultaneously exercise and undergo this power (Foucault 1984b: 98; Mayer, 2000: 23, 87, 90; Mills 2001: 34).

The power analyses underlying the arguments and practices in the male involvement and partnership discourses analysed here are quite different from this perspective. This is not to say that at all times there is a matter of one-dimensional power analysis with a dichotomous view of men as powerful oppressors and women as powerless victims. Although the above discussed deterministic notions of men and women arguably imply an understanding of power relations as fairly fixed, these notions are clearly questioned. Indeed, the discourses analysed here do not reflect a homogenous power analysis.

Rather, the various positions imply different implicit understanding of power, frequently somewhat corresponding to the different dimensions in Lukes' three-dimensional view of power. I have pointed at how definitions of equality, and thereby power analyses, are contested. This is linked to the contesting of definitions of gender difference and the tension between obscuring and acknowledging power relations in partnerships. On the one hand, men and women are argued to be working together with mutual goals as equal partners. According to this line of reasoning, leadership should be shared and men and women should have the same positions in a joint struggle. On the other hand, paternalism and dominance are questioned by arguing that it is women who should lead the struggle and men who should be accountable to women. Yet, according to both these perspectives, men can deliberately resist power relations between male and female gender activists, by being equal partners, or by being accountable to the women's movement and/or following women's leadership. While it

is sometimes reasoned that change is difficult to achieve, this arguably implies a dualist view of power versus resistance.

By contrast, this thesis has shown that gender hierarchies are simultaneously reproduced and resisted in the articulations of positions related to bridging women's and men's gender activism. Hence, in line with a Foucauldian perspective, I argue that resistance should not be understood as outside the power relations it opposes (Mbilinyi, 1992: 177). There is no outside of power, which both the partnership terminology and arguments for women's safe spaces might suggest. Instead, gendered power relations are simultaneously reproduced and resisted through discursive practices in gender activism and the creation of links between men's and women's activism. Not only are gendered power relations complex and distributed as such, they also intersect with other power relations.

This is, thus, an example of how tremendously complex power relations are. Whereas the language of accountability, as demonstrated above, arguably reveals the power relations reproduced in the partnership discourse presenting men as able/willing to change and be equal partners, both these positions are used to resist the power relations involved in deterministic representations of men.

5.2. INTERSECTING POWER RELATIONS

The politics of HIV/AIDS and gender is increasingly transnational and international development cooperation plays a crucial role in this development. Gender is paid tremendous attention to in this aid, and funding to HIV/AIDS work has increased dramatically in recent years. Hence, it is important also to look at the role of development aid in relation to gender, antiviolence and HIV/AIDS activism in South Africa. Accordingly, this thesis has looked into how gendered power relations intersect with inequalities between the Global South and the Global North in international development cooperation.

As discussed in section 6.1.1., the unequal relation between donors and recipients is not overcome simply by employing the partnership terminology. I pointed at tensions between, on the one hand, appreciating the active involvement of donors as partners in a joint struggle and, on the other hand, recognising and resisting power relations between donors and recipients. Yet, there are major differences between donors and thereby between ways in which power is articulated in partnerships. Moreover, similar to gendered power relations, it

is never a matter of simple hierarchies. Corresponding to previous research, I have shown that there is manoeuvring room available for negotiating and resisting the different kinds of donor requirements. The ways in which these power relations are reproduced and resisted intersect with gendered power relations.

Not only do donors' requirements about measurable outcomes and their attempts to influence the values of recipient NGOs sometimes imply that gender inequalities are not dealt with appropriately; I have also demonstrated why the partnership discourse and its language of accountability should be understood in the light of current developments in international development cooperation at large. Whereas the terminology of partnership and (in particular) accountability is a way to criticise gendered power relations, it is clear that aid and power relations between donors and recipient NGOs also play a role in relation to these types of rhetoric and practice. They do so in various ways. First of all, the partnership terminology used in relation to creating links between female and male gender activism is similar to the one employed when referring to partnerships between donors and recipients of aid in terms of how they deal with power relations in collaborations. Moreover, corresponding to this broader partnership discourse, cooperation between NGOs is highly valued. Networking between organisations focusing on men and women's organisations are thus part of a more general trend.

Such networking can, similarly to other formal and informal partnerships in the civil society sector, be encouraged or even enforced by donors. In addition, the language and practices of partnership and accountability are probably employed as a means to deal with issues of credibility and legitimacy in a double sense. Firstly, given the fairly high levels of scepticism, primarily of women's organisations towards organisations focusing on men, partnerships with women and employing the language of accountability, are ways to increase their credibility and signal being progressive. This is so as women are associated with credibility given current gender inequalities. Secondly, as brought up in the literature review, the legitimacy of NGOs in general is currently put into question.

Following the increase in the number of and funding to NGOs, many ask whom they represent to justify their potential political influence. Linked to these concerns are calls for NGO accountability, also articulated by donors. Hence, when EngenderHealth and Sonke draw on the language of accountability it is probably not merely a matter of resisting

gendered power relations in partnerships and negotiating the subject position of the dominant/patriarchal male, as discussed above; rather, it is also likely to be a means of dealing with issues of questioned credibility and legitimacy as NGOs in general and as organisations focusing on men in particular. Similarly, when people from women's organisations position themselves against 'women's distrust', they both negotiate such a subject position and potentially deal with issues of credibility given the current 'trend' of working with men and pressures from the donor community on gender, antiviolenace and HIV/AIDS organisations to do so. This trend and pressure is, however, also resisted. Linked to the fact that it seems fairly easy to receive funding and attention for work with men is, certainly, the issue of competition for funding. As demonstrated in the section on solidarity and distrust, there is a concern that resources are or might become redirected to work with men at the expense of women's organisations. When such concerns are raised, gendered power relations and hierarchies in international development cooperation are resisted simultaneously, thereby challenging the partnership discourse in a double sense.

In brief, the languages and practices of partnership and accountability concerning the relation between organisations focusing on men and women's rights organisations, should be understood in relation to both gender inequalities and inequalities in international development cooperation.

However, one of the major limitations of this study is that it does not pay more attention to such intersecting power relations (as a result of the limitations of my data, cf. p. 17). Further research is needed that analyses the aspect of aid and global power relations in relation to partnerships between men's and women's gender activism more in-depth. This also applies to how power relations related to, for instance, 'race', ethnicity, class and sexuality are articulated, reproduced and resisted in such partnerships, as well as in collaborations between NGOs working primarily with these issues and gender, antiviolenace and HIV/AIDS organisations.

5.3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the results of this thesis are based on a study of five specific NGOs in South Africa and should not be assumed to apply to all similar organisations working with gender, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS focusing on men and women respectively. Not only are EngenderHealth, Sonke, Yabonga, POWA and

Masimanyane possibly exceptionally committed to collaborate across the gender divide⁶⁰, but there are also a number of particularities of the South African context as such. For instance, the magnitude of the ‘twin-epidemics’ of gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS in the country obviously impacts on different forms of gender activism. It is also likely to be related to the importance attached to rethinking masculinities in this work. Arguments for partnerships and for work with men to be consistent with the women’s movement could be partly linked to the fact that the women’s movement and the gender sector in South Africa are fairly divided rather than unified.

Also, scepticism about male gender activists should possibly to some degree be understood in the light of the extremely reactionary gender oriented mobilisations among men in South Africa recently, especially during and in the aftermath of Jacob Zuma’s rape trial (cf. 5.2.1.). In spite of these and other particularities of the South African context and the specific organisations studied here I have aimed at demonstrating how the particular people in this particular context draw on more general discourses, which have global dimensions.

It has been a struggle to attempt to distance myself from these discourses as I also draw on them and as I am part of the gender and SRHR field myself, although in a different context. Indeed, as previously mentioned, my starting point was very much in line with the intersection of the male involvement and partnership discourses. In brief, I believed that work with men and male gender activism are possible and necessary, but need to be in partnership with the women’s movement partly in order to avoid some of the assumed pitfalls of work with men. The conclusions drawn on the basis of this study do not criticise these standpoints as such. I would still argue that there is a potential danger in the male involvement discourse and work with men being somewhat disconnected from work with women and the women’s movement. As this study points at, increasing the representation of women in work with men is, indeed a way of resisting ⁶⁰ As mentioned in the methodology chapter, some of these similarities between Sonke and EngenderHealth regarding their relation to the women’s movement are likely to be due to the overlap of these NGOs as far as staff and management is concerned. Hence, more research on links or lack of links between male and female gender activism, an extremely under-researched field, is certainly needed.

I have in this study demonstrated how gendered power relations also are articulated in various arguments and practices related to partnerships between male and female gender activism. I

have done so mainly by studying the resistance to power relations in partnerships and to certain deterministic notions of men and women often articulated in this very resistance. If we accept, as Foucault proposes, that both power and resistance are articulated ‘everywhere’, there are obviously multiple resistances which I have not been able to identify and which arguably would have revealed other power relations in relation to my research questions. The ones in focus here should be understood in relation to my feminist conviction and, possibly to some extent, my own subject position. Yet, the resistances I have pointed at here do reveal that while equality is continuously strived for, the structural context to some extent undermine this struggle for equality and gendered power relations are still reproduced. I have shown, however, that it is certainly not a matter of organisations focusing on men being particularly homogenously patriarchal or inevitably entrenching male privilege. The organisations studied are fragmented spaces where interests are constituted by discourse rather than given and should, thus, not be assumed to influence men’s and women’s gender activism in any easily predictable way.

Although it is mainly EngenderHealth and Sonke which employ the language of men’s ability and willingness to change and be equal partners and the representatives of women’s organisations which point at male dominance in the gender sector, it is clear that everyone employs arguments and practices that resist as well as reproduce gendered power relations. Moreover, I have shown how these positions where gendered power relations are reproduced and resisted, in complex ways, are related to inequalities in international development cooperation.

To conclude, I do argue that it is indeed important to strengthen the links between men’s and women’s gender, antiviolenace and HIV/AIDS activism. Such arguments and practices are clearly a way to resist gender inequalities articulated and reproduced in work with men which tends to focus on men per se. This resistance reveals how a focus on exploring men’s experiences, feelings and perspectives risks leading to work with men which potentially neglect its relation to and impact on women and hierarchical gender relations. Yet, arguments for and practices of creating such links also recurrently fail to challenge intersecting power relations of gender and the Global South/Global North. Moreover, they frequently reinforce a dualistic view and deterministic notions of men and women.

The underlying gender and power analyses in arguments for and practices of building bridges between female and male gender activism, and thus the ways in which these resist and reproduce power relations, are not necessarily linked to creating linkages as such. Rather, they are part of the more general male involvement and partnership discourses. Nevertheless, they clearly need to be reflected upon by the NGOs and donors engaging with creating such links between male and female activism in the struggles against gender inequality, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. By opening up some of the positions of resistance pointed at in this study, these struggles can be strengthened.

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Appendix 1

Of course I did not use this as a manuscript since not all of the questions were suitable for every interview and some of the questions got altered during the interview.

- 1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.*
- 2. When did you get infected?*
- 3. Do you know how you got infected?*
- 4. How and when did you understand you were infected?*
- 5. Do you use any ARVs? Any other help? Counseling, diet etc.*
- 6. Do you feel it is a typical group in society that gets infected or does the disease spread throughout the society?*
- 7. Do you know many people infected by the disease?*
- 8. What reasons do you believe are the cause of the spread?*
- 9. What kinds of myths or misunderstandings surround the disease? Are they worsening the spread?*
- 10. What is the most common misunderstanding about HIV that you have encountered?*
- 11. Have you in your profession encountered problems that made it hard to get thru to your clients because of their misunderstandings?*
- 12. What did you know about HIV before you got infected?*
- 13. Would you say that your picture of HIV has changed since you got infected?*
- 14. Where can people get information about HIV?*
- 15. Is the information about HIV available for all people?*
- 16. Are there any taboos connected to the disease?*
- 17. Is it still difficult to talk about HIV?*
- 18. Is sexual education on the schedule at every high school?*
- 19. Do you think that sexual education is enough to raise awareness amongst school children?*

20. *What educational improvement would you like to see and why?*

21. *What does the government do?*

22. *Do you think they do enough?*

23. *What do you think needs to be done to stop the spread?*

24. *Is there anything you feel I have forgotten?*

Appendix 2

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ANC – African National Congress

ARV – Antiretroviral Drug

ART – Antiretroviral Therapy

CD4 – The molecule attached to T-cells.

HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus

IDU – Injecting Drug User

IGO – International Governmental Organization

MCT – Mother to Child Transmission

MSF – Médecins Sans Frontières aka Doctors Without Borders

MSM – Men who have Sex with Men

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

PEP – Post-Exposure Prophylaxis

SIV – Simian Immunodeficiency Virus